

THE HIGHLANDERS OF THE SOUTH

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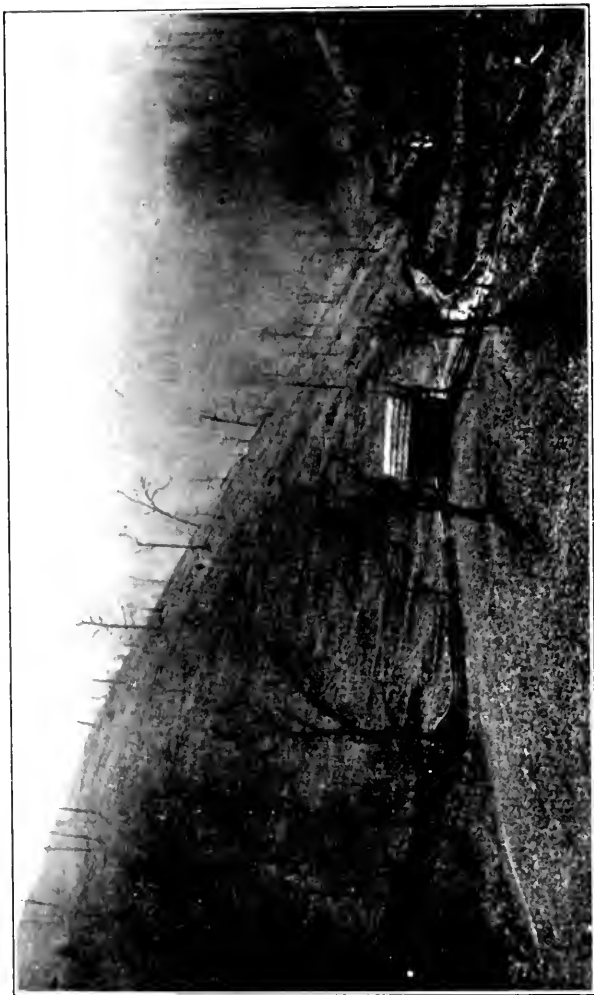
SAMUEL H. THOMPSON



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THE HOME PLACE

THE HIGHLANDERS OF THE SOUTH

By
SAMUEL H. THOMPSON



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TO MR. JOHN W. FISHER AND MR. JOHN
A. PATTEN, WHO, WITH OTHER LOYAL
LAYMEN IN THE FIELD, HAVE, WITH
MONEY AND THROUGH PERSONAL SERV-
ICE, AIDED THE HIGHLANDER OF THE
SOUTH, THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS APPRE-
CIATIVELY DEDICATED.

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CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| I From Whence They Come..... | 13 |
| II Where They Live..... | 19 |
| III Their Characteristics..... | 26 |
| IV Their Manners and Customs..... | 29 |
| V What They Do..... | 34 |
| VI Their Service..... | 38 |
| VII What They Do Not Know..... | 44 |
| VIII The Problem..... | 54 |
| IX Other Denominations..... | 65 |
| X The Methodist Episcopal Church..... | 69 |
| XI The Progress of the South..... | 72 |
| XII Unto the Last..... | 79 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|---|--------------|
| The Home Place..... | Frontispiece |
| | FACING PAGE |
| A Genuine "Razorback"..... | 31 |
| An Old Church in which Methodists Continue to Worship..... | 50 |
| A Weaver and Lover of Cats..... | 79 |

FOREWORD

IN the gathering of materials for this brief account the writer has sought to strike a happy medium between any existing extremes; he has endeavored to be conservative in all things, and he has been careful to give only such statements as may be readily substantiated.

With the hope of stirring the people everywhere to a deeper sense of their obligation to their less fortunate brothers, and with the desire to create within the minds of those who can the spirit of helpfulness to those who cannot but would if they could, is this little volume sent forth.

SAMUEL H. THOMPSON.

Chuckey, Tennessee.

INTRODUCTION

It was a very happy thought on the part of the Home Missionary Board to ask Principal Samuel H. Thompson to prepare this little volume descriptive of our work in the South. No one in all my acquaintance is better prepared to do such work intelligently and effectively than Principal Thompson. Here he has lived and wrought for years. All who know him are deeply impressed with the earnestness of his consecration and his splendid service to the cause of Christian education in Tennessee.

As our great Church becomes aware of the important work being done in this section the result is sure to be a lively interest and a more active coöperation.

I am glad to bid this little volume a hearty God-speed and to hope for it a mission of blessing to many lives.

WILLIAM F. ANDERSON.

CHAPTER I

FROM WHENCE THEY COME

It is rather singular that a people migratory in their habits may be able to trace their ancestry for an almost unbroken period of nearly twenty centuries. This is still more singular when we consider that these people were probably continent dwellers to begin with; later, islanders; after many years they migrated to another island, and thence to a great and rapidly developing continent—North America. People migratory both by habit and by nature usually lose sight of such remote things as ancestry and lineage in the nearer and more personal interest of posterity and sustenance therefor. Moreover, it would not be expected of a people in the times of struggle where might makes right, of conquest not only for gain but for life as well, and of the making of a new home, that they should preserve in fullness of detail such records. Thus we find little written of the early history of this people.

But from the time of the invasion of Ireland about the beginning of the present era by some foreign tribes, probably from the European continent near by, forty-six in number, who were victors on the Hibernian Isle, we have a practically unbroken account of the people known to history as the Scotch-Irish. Among the tribes above mentioned was one known as the Scotriage, and subsequently by the Latinized form, Scoti. They

seem to have been victors over all other tribes and to have led the later invasions of Britain. Early they showed advanced elements of thrift and progress. Cormac, a chief of the Irish Scoti, is said to have introduced, as early as the third century, water mills into Ireland, and to have established schools for the study of law, military affairs, and the annals of the country. Laws attributed to him continued in force all through the Middle Ages. Is it any wonder that the descendants of such chiefs have been always a liberty-loving people?

These Scoti chiefs and their progeny continued to keep themselves known in the border warfare of Ireland and Britain, including Scotland, to which country they gave its present name, until the accession of James VI of Scotland to the British throne in 1603. Some vainly thought at this time that because the Irish were the original "Scoti" the Scottish king would sympathize with oppressed, duke-ridden, and tax-burdened Ireland. But not so. Could these same people look upon their beloved isle from then to now they would see but little difference so far as oppression is concerned.

But they did not close their struggles for liberty because of discouragement. Forced to take the "Black Oath" of Charles I, they continued to be objects of oppression, after having again migrated, this time from Scotland to Ireland, early in the seventeenth century, taking residence in the county Ulster, known later as the Ulster Plantation. In subsequent persecutions of trade by William III, a liberal-minded man but forced as king to suppress, if possible, the Irish woolen trade, the Ulster

weavers were not crushed, but rather their industry flourished.

The Scots of Ulster were supplemented by some Huguenot refugees, who established manufacturing interests in the county. However, a little later commercial restraints brought their interests to naught.

The sacramental test of 1704 was seemingly just as hurtful to the Scottish Presbyterians in Ireland as to the Irish Catholics, though the former defended the town of Londonderry in favor of the crown. But the last straw came in 1772, when the "Steelboys" rose against the exactions of absentee landlords, who often turned out Protestant yeomen to get a higher rent from the Roman Catholic cottiers. The dispossessed patriots, true to their liberty and justice-loving inheritance, migrated to the great American continent and carried with them an undying hatred of England which had much to say in the American Revolution so soon to follow. Thus it is seen that not only for injustice to America, but to other colonies as well, did England have to account.

Prior to this time, however, many of the Scotch-Irish, so called by their having gone from Scotland to Ulster, had come to the southeastern coast of North America, settling in the Carolinas, some of them forming a part of the "Regulators" who were defeated by the crown troops under Governor Tryon at the battle on the Alamance River early in the seventies of the eighteenth century. They had again resisted oppressive taxation, the tax this time being levied to erect a mansion for the British governor. Many of these defeated patriots had

to flee into more remote sections, not a few going into the territory out of which have since been carved the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, and helping to settle those unbroken forests.

While a large per cent of the some five millions of people in the Southern Appalachians are Scotch-Irish, it must not be supposed that all are of that descent. There is a strain of other blood, but doubtless the oldest strain is Scotch-Irish. Next to these people come the Germans and Dutch—"Black Dutch" they are called by many. Of more recent years many emigrants to these fertile valleys and well-timbered hills have been what are known locally as "Pennsylvania Dutch," being descendants of early Dutch and German settlers in the land of Pennsylvania. It must not be forgotten that among many of the Southern peoples the word "Dutch" is meant to imply Germans as well as the people from Holland. These settlers, whether of the pure German or Dutch strain, prove good and valuable additions to the native population, being industrious, energetic, thrifty, and economical. In many instances they have a trade and ply it well. Some of them are potters; others, carpenters, masons, and blacksmiths. Not a few of the early German settlers have given able and successful ministers, one German family giving four sons to this greatly needed profession. Another family of German and Scotch-Irish blending has five preachers, three sons and two sons-in-law. All of these nationalities have contributed to the sturdy yeomanry of the country districts. Nor should we forget a few French people who came to the Western wilderness and contributed their share

in making a fertile field out of a dense forest. Sometimes they were refugees; again, they came of their own free will, seeking a new country. England did not fail to contribute valuable material from her overplus of island population—a population whose ancestors under Henry I, Henry III, and King John first received a taste for constitutional liberty and slept not until possessed by them on both sides the Atlantic.

Perhaps a few other nationalities have come, but their influence is not so marked. Once in a great while one finds an old Spanish name whose owner doubtless descended from some follower of Cortez, Pizzaro, or De Soto.

From such cosmopolitan sources one would expect a cosmopolitan people. But such is hardly the case, as will be seen later.

(Out of this strange heterogeneous mass there has evolved a compact whole presenting a solid front against Romanism.) Early came the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists. It would seem that the Methodist Church took the lead among the common people. We read from a distinguished historian of one of these mountain States, James Phelan in his History of Tennessee: "These [the Methodists] were fond of touching the emotions and feelings of their congregations, and appealed directly to their hearts. They brought religion home to the hearts of their hearers, whereas the old Presbyterians only tried to affect their reason by the use of logic and of quotations from the Bible, and by expositions of doctrine. The Methodists soon outstripped the Presbyterians, and have since spread all through the Southwest."

The same writer pays the following tribute to the circuit-rider: "The circuit-rider has done more to build up, broaden, and strengthen the Methodist Church than all other human agencies combined. As the number of preachers was insufficient to give one to each congregation, it became necessary for one preacher to take charge of several churches and travel from one place to another. He also at times organized new congregations. The circuit-rider was generally a man of great bravery, and was ready to face death at any time in order to advance the cause of religion and to save a soul. He was not often a man of much learning, but he was pure as a child and kind and gentle. Frequent mention is made by some of the early writers of the circuit-rider, with his saddlebags, on a rawboned horse, plodding unconcernedly through a forest where a bullet from an Indian gun might at any minute bring him to his death."

In connection with the establishment of churches it is a significant fact that the Roman Catholics never gained much ground among these mountain people. However, in the opinion of the writer they are gaining more now than ever before. They are establishing little missions, with the hope of making them larger, wherever they can get a few souls. In the rapidly growing towns they seek to be ready for the newcomers from the North and East. In some sections they send out literature soliciting financial aid for what they term a worthy and needy mission field. [All they say may be true, but if you are afraid of Romanism get ready to combat it at once, and first of all and more effectively where it finds virgin soil.]

CHAPTER II

WHERE THEY LIVE

A CLEAR estimate of any people cannot be formed without a knowledge of the natural features by which they are surrounded. Topography often has as much to do with the formation of character as racial inheritances. A man cannot be correctly estimated unless the mountains that encompassed him or the plains that spread out before his feet or the rivers that nourished his vegetation are known and measured. It may be that he dwells on the highland, where the cool breezes of summer are but little more than the breath of winter; or that his abode is in the valley, where the rudest blast from the fiercest storms never reaches his humble but homelike cabin. Perchance he dwells among the fertile prairies or rolling lands of the great West, whose virgin soil renders him independent so far as the goods of this world are concerned. But all these things are character-making elements.

Any good geography will show the natural features of North America by the relief maps. The Southern Appalachians are seen to be well supplied with water whose drainage is most excellent. The streams shown on the relief maps are perhaps the least important save as a sort of receiving canal for the other and smaller streams. In the thousands of valleys to be found among these mountains it is doubtful if you find one five miles long destitute of running water in some form. Some-

times it is a rapidly flowing stream having its source at the head of the valley, or, as sometimes occurs, far up on the mountain side gushing forth in purity and abundance. And it may be right here that an illicit distillery exists and "moonshine" whisky may flow as freely and almost as abundantly as the crystal water.

In this Appalachian system of about 175,000 square miles there dwell some four or five millions of people who are essentially like other folks, and who are first of all patriotic. A century and a half ago this was practically an unbroken forest. No one east at that time thought habitation in these mountains possible, much less probable. It is remembered that General Washington declared that if the British should defeat him in the valleys of the New England rivers and elsewhere he would take his handful of troops beyond the Alleghanies and there forever defy approach.

The Father of his Country was by no means alone in regarding the Appalachians as the natural western limit of the country, and the formidable limit of all progress in the direction of the setting sun. It would not be expected that a system of mountains so large even as to have its northern origin in Newfoundland and its southern disappearance among the hills of northern Alabama would be a barrier to men who braved the Atlantic for conscience' sake. Even larger barriers would not have deterred them. As population increased and men desired more forest area passes were found in the mountains and the way was opened for the pioneer, the advance guard of civilization. Daniel Boone, the noted hunter and trapper, and

others of his kind who could not endure a neighbor so close as five miles kept up a constant search for new and untried hunting grounds. It was often the purpose of the settlers to make for themselves a little place of their own and discourage others from taking land near by, thus reserving fertile spots for their own kith and kin.

The mountains are not always high; nor are the valleys always deep. Taking the Appalachians as a whole, they vary from a few hundred feet above sea level to the lofty height of almost seven thousand feet, as seen in Clingman's Dome, Mount Mitchell, and others. It is true that habitations are not found at many places on these highest peaks, yet Cloudland, 6,394 feet in height, is a great summer resort, and people do live there through the winter. The hotel here is built directly across the surveyed line between the States of North Carolina and Tennessee.

From some of these mountain streams the smaller towns and cities get their water supply, and that abundantly, of the purest water known. We know one little town whose supply of water comes from a mountain spring the estimated capacity of which is ten million gallons daily. Another use of these rapidly flowing streams is to turn small corn mills grinding perhaps ten to twenty bushels of meal per day. A few turn roller flouring mills, but the trade is almost entirely local custom. Recent devastation of forests by lumber dealers has brought innumerable steam saw mills, whose work is not so commendable, because it means not only a decrease of our Southern forests but the impoverishment of the land as well. Mr. Graves and his

Forestry Commission would do well not merely to pass through this section touching only the principal cities, but they should go deep into the mountains and there see what the onward march of so-called civilization has done.

Aside from the finest of hemlock, poplar, cherry, birch, oak, pine, gum, walnut, maple, and almost every other species of timber found on this continent, many herbs of medicinal properties grow in abundance in these regions—even to this day the “yarb doctor” is not so uncommon—ginseng, called “sang” by the mountain people; mandrake or may apple, mullein, wild indigo, lady’s slipper, black snakeroot, burdock, lobelia, Poor Robinson’s tobacco, catnip, and many other herbs the essences of which are often used as simple remedies by these people, and frequently with more effect than “doctor stuff,” as the people sometimes derisively refer to the medicine given by practicing physicians.

Many of the useful minerals and some of the precious metals are found in these mountains. Not infrequently stories are told of men who mine their own lead and run their own bullets in the hand-ladle for the old-fashioned “bear gun” or smaller squirrel rifle. Iron ore is perhaps the most abundant of the minerals found. The ore produced from the mines of these mountains is said to be the finest in the United States. In one of these valleys there are ridges containing seemingly an inexhaustible supply of iron ore assaying ninety-six per cent pure iron, said to be the richest known outside of Denmark. Nothing need be said of the Virginia coal fields. Their riches are too widely known to need comment here. Much zinc is

found, but not in pockets such as to be of great value. Copper is found in some of the States, and the mines therein worked to advantage, as at the famous Ducktown or Copperhill mines in Tennessee. Phosphate beds are so abundant as to be making men rich. No finer marble is in the country than here. Tennessee building stone is famous throughout the nation. Land plaster (gypsum) has made many a poor farmer wealthy despite his ignorance. Mica, feldspar, hematite, and barytes are some of the many other useful minerals found. Traces of gold and silver are here, but not more than a few hundred thousand dollars' worth of these metals have been mined. They do not occur in great abundance.

Every stranger coming here is delighted with the sublime scenery. Bishop Foster did not hesitate to say that it is as grand as any in the Alpine regions. Others have testified to the grandeur being unsurpassed by the Rockies and other famous regions. There are many varieties of valleys and hills occasioned by the numerous forms of the mountains themselves. It is no uncommon thing to be on some of these high peaks basking in the sunshine while just below you a few hundred yards may be a heavy cloud drenching any mountain climber next below it. "The Battle above the Clouds" is no myth.

The climate is most salubrious. People live to a great age in these mountains. Their vigor and agility are wonderful. We know a man in his ninety-sixth year who frequently shaves himself, and has no trouble to walk without a cane. The story is told of a Northerner coming South in

search of health, and, finding what appeared a delightful place in the mountains near Asheville, he was about to engage lodging when he came in contact with one of the natives in the front yard of his own household. The native was shedding tears as if in great pain, though he was to all appearance threescore and ten. The stranger accosted him to know the cause of his distress when the following conversation took place, as we have it:

"What is the cause of your distress, my friend?" said the kindly disposed stranger.

"Pap whopped me," replied the native.

"Good gracious, man, where is your father?"

"Up in the loft puttin' granddad ter bed," was the characteristic reply.

Thus you see people never die in these mountains. Without more levity, it is more evident every year that eventually many parts of these mountains will be utilized for the erection of sanitariums for the treatment of consumption, tuberculosis, bronchitis, and catarrhal diseases.

With all these attractions, the habitat of the Southern Highlander is yet one of seclusion and retirement. He really has not much ambition to change it. But once he goes a-roaming he may stay away for years. In some places he resents the coming of the locomotive, and looks upon so tame a thing as a pike road as an intrusion into his rightful domain. In many counties not a railroad has gone, and may not go for years. The narrow mountain public roads are often impassable in winter and the rainy season of the spring. Even horsemen have a difficult time to get across the

mountains at such times. The only sure way is on foot, and then you may be stopped by swollen streams, fallen trees, or other barriers. The bridle path is the most convenient and safest of all the roads.

Thus has the horizon of the mountaineer been limited by the surrounding mountain tops and the heads of the valleys in which his humble dwelling has been located. His has been a time of rest and peace and quiet. Has he profited by it?

CHAPTER III

THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

If you should see a man make the sign of the cross before eating you would not need to ask his religion; if you should hear him say "hadn't ought a done that," or "Cunnel Johnson, suh, of Geo'gia," you would at once recognize his home section. In the same way would you know the mountain man by the way he talks, acts, and has his being.

It does not seem out of place to put loyalty as the first of the characteristics by which a man of the Southern Appalachians should be known. He may not have any Indian blood in his veins, but loyalty, to him, can have but one meaning, and that never to forget either friend or foe. Likes and dislikes without any logical reason save that of an unreasoning prejudice have cost many a man his county office and many a church its opening wedge into a community needing the influence only a church could give. It is an old saying that if a mountaineer likes you he will die for you, and if he dislikes you you will in all probability die for him. The writer fears this is all too true. Many a time has this loyal mountaineer been known to travel miles on foot, enduring severe cold and pain and often hunger, to warn a friend thought to be in danger. Doubtless he would be just as zealous in the pursuit of an enemy. He has been known to divide his last morsel of food with a way-

faring man, be he stranger or acquaintance. What greater loyalty could one find anywhere?

He is essentially a man of the woods, and prefers that his surroundings be such. "Store clothes" may have come to many of these people, but the real mountain man prefers his "double Dutch breeches" and his brogan shoes tied with ground-hog hide; while his wife, warm-hearted soul that she is, wants her "linsey-worsted" basque-and-overskirt set off with a little "breakfast shawl" and a large kerchief bound over her head. Glowing colors appeal to the hardy and simple-hearted mountaineers almost as much as to the aboriginal tribes on other continents of which we hear so much from traders and travelers. You often see the mountain youth with a red handkerchief about his neck, and if it is silk in quality and deep red in color he is more the envy of his fellows. Not less pleasing are these fast colors to the feminine part of the inhabitants, bright red and deep blue being their favorite colors. If you doubt this just examine the calicoes and notions in a mountain country store. It often matters not whether the colors are fast or merely passing. The present show is sufficient to sell the goods, and that is all for which either the merchant or the customer seems to care. Shirts, trousers, coat, shoes, socks, and hat constitute the wardrobe of the average Southern mountaineer. Very few of them wear underclothes. They are hardy, and nearly all of them have early in life been subjected to some kind of hardening process so that they do not mind what many of us would term severe hardships.

Unkemptness, to coin a word, would perhaps be

another characteristic of this son of the forest. The longer he wears his hair, and the more uncombed, the more of a mountain man is he. Just a few weeks ago the writer saw a mountaineer come in astride of one of four mules drawing a lumber wagon. On his head was the characteristic black slouch hat covering long, flowing locks of hair as black as the hat. His face had not seen razor or scissors in months. Would you be surprised to know that this man is a mountain correspondent to a county newspaper? His letters are not silly, by any means, but contain good sense in many instances. Of course, they need some editorial correction, but they are much better than no letters. This man is a typical mountaineer.

I was about to say illiteracy is another characteristic, but I shall reserve the discussion on that for another chapter. I think it but fair to say that the average mountaineer uses tobacco in some way; usually it is in all the ways known to man. And he knows not when he began to use it. He chews, smokes, snuffs, and doubtless sometimes eats the weed. Yes, and he drinks the product of his still, too. And he will swear some if he has occasion. But these also are to be saved for a later chapter.

With all these seemingly conflicting characteristics, he is kind, warm-hearted, cheerful, friendly, amiable, and gentle as a child. He will go out of his way to do you a favor, and you can count him a "square man" every day in the week. He will go with you to the last ditch, and cross it with you if you need him.

CHAPTER IV

THEIR MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

THIS Southern mountaineer is a queer mixture of manners and brusqueness. He would extend to you the hospitality of his home for days at a time, but would resent any attempt on your part to introduce modern manners even in the most limited way, as the following incident will show. A gentleman traveling in the mountains sought shelter from the night in the humble home of one of these honest fellows. He was told that he might share the bed with the teacher of the mountain "skule." The stranger graciously accepted the conditions and bade his host a pleasant good-night. The next morning, thinking to continue in the apparent good graces of the owner of the house, the stranger saluted him with a cheery "Good-morning, sir."

"I staid hyar last night, tew; yer needn't be speakin' ter me, stranger."

And the good old mountaineer meant just what he said. No ceremonies for him. He had spoken words of greeting upon the arrival of the stranger the afternoon before, and they were enough for him even though the visitor should remain a guest a whole week. No unnecessary use of words for him. One greeting was sufficient for all time.

The mountaineer's manners are brusque and often blunt, but beneath the rough exterior there

beats the kindest heart kept in the warmest breast any man ever knew.

Sensitive, too, is this man whose life is often one of isolation and seclusion. Poverty seldom has a thick skin. Let this Highlander of the South but think you look upon him as one not up to the best as the outside world calls the best, and from that moment his manner toward you is cold and indifferent, if not impolite. No man—not even an Indian—can show more indifference and utter unconcern for present people and things than can this mountaineer when he so chooses. A man at no court, be he plenipotentiary or a mere attaché, needs more diplomacy and tact and ability than does the man who comes to reach this untutored child who has within him so much latent force, strong and vigorous but undeveloped. Approach him in the right way and you forever have the key to his life, his habits, his hopes, his ambitions, and all that he holds dear. But approach him without skill, foresight, and judgment, and you are at once tightly barred from ever gaining this entrance so much sought and so badly needed.

In his habits, manners, and customs he is almost primitive. The hand loom is by no means a thing of the past; nor is the hand grater for making corn meal. The geared or yoked oxen may be seen attached to a wooden plow. You can yet find the puncheon floor and buildings covered with boards held on by poles and logs and even rocks. Crude utensils for tilling the soil may yet be found. Many horseshoes and plow points—"bull tongues"—are made in the ordinary blacksmith shop or forge. Split baskets and splitbottom chairs are made by



A GENUINE "RAZORBACK"

these people, and they decorate their baskets with gay colors made from their own compound of bark, ooze, and wood coloring. Not a few make their own shoes, and almost all stockings are home-knit. Leather is tanned often at a little bark yard whose capacity is from one to ten hides per day or less. Harness or "gears," saddles, and other outfits for horses are made at home by the oil lamp, or perhaps oftener by the light from the pine torch. He gets his meal at the little mountain mill, and his flour, the little he uses, at a river mill some distance from home. When it comes to a question of milling he usually carries his grist on his shoulders to the mill and returns with it in the same manner. His meat or bacon he raises himself, seldom butchering anything but a "razorback," a term suggested by the thinness of the animal and also by the length of its nose. Needless to say that this species of swine is of mixed blood. He comes to his present state, however, largely by lack of care. Never does he get any food save acorns and chestnuts and fruit from such other trees as the woods of the hills and mountains afford. From this foraging direct is the hog butchered and used for food. Now and then he is fed for a week or two before going to grace the table of this man who likes his corn pone and bacon.

Our mountaineer is a great lover of fun. Perhaps nothing keeps him from sleep. Responsibilities rest lightly upon his shoulders. If he has a neighbor a mile away he is happy. One in speaking distance would make him no happier. No ten-cent moving-picture performance or magic-lantern show comes close without getting him for a patron.

He also goes to the county site to see the circus. It is interesting on "show day" to watch them come in all sorts of conveyances, from the pedestrian to the wagon drawn by mules, horses, or oxen. Not infrequently will you see one ox hooked to a wagon taking the mountaineer and his family to see the elephant. Here again you see the prevalence of gay, gaudy colors. This mountain man will spend all his savings at the circus. Sometimes he is caught by the "three pea" man; again it is the "wheel." He is great to take a game of chance. He will also "take in" the big circus. Recently a showman exhibiting in this mountain territory, after a prosperous day, remarked, "There are more fools and fifty-cent pieces in this county than anywhere we have been save one place," and he named a county in another mountain State. If our mountain friend has meal enough for a day or two he is not going to worry about the rest. He believes in letting every day provide for itself.

In the heart of these mountains you find the old-fashioned wood-chopping and "quilting bee" where the men cut wood and the women quilt. In the afternoon or evening the young folks gather for what they ordinarily term a "frolic," meaning a gathering where they are free to play all sorts of games, often dancing to the music of the violin or banjo. The man who plays the fiddle or picks the banjo is the hero of the occasion. He bears his honors lightly, but the flaming red silk kerchief inartistically knotted at the throat together with his musical instrument is his badge of authority. Everyone present looks up to him. He is usually

the most dignified person present, seldom speaking unless spoken to.

It is also the custom of these mountain folk to want to know all about any newcomer or stranger who may be passing through. We have known them to ask the traveler who he was, his business in that part of the country, and whether or not he meant to remain in the settlement overnight. We knew one of the women to ask one of our Home Missionary women who happened by accident to be her traveling companion how long she meant to stay, and what was her business, and she capped the conversation by saying, "An' what did ye brung with ye?"

Right here we might say a word about what this man eats. He is not very choice of food. Nor is he particular as to the quality of the cooking. The women resent the coming of the cooking school, and think if they cook like their mothers it ought to be good enough for anyone. The writer visited a District Conference in one of these mountain districts in an official capacity. He was assigned to the home in which the district superintendent—then called presiding elder, locally, "The Elder"—was being entertained. It was, of course, considered the best home in that community. There was not a carpet on the floor. The women of the house wore no shoes—went barefoot. Our food was corn pone and poorly baked flour pone, cane molasses, meat broiled until it swam in its own grease, a thick-crusted pie, and some sort of jelly which shall be nameless. No greater work can be done by any Church than to improve the culinary habits of these people.

CHAPTER V

WHAT THEY DO

I do not want to say that this man is lazy or indolent or shiftless, for he is not exactly either of these, but rather a combination of all. A few years ago the writer of this said in the columns of a Southern magazine that the average man of the South does not actually work more than half the time. That statement has not been contradicted. This applies all over the South, and is no more true of the man of the mountains than of the man who dwells in the fertile valleys away from any mountains at all. Some think that genius is the result of rest, being accumulated by atavism through successive generations. If this be true the South, in the opinion of the writer, should produce more geniuses than any part of the country; for we do rest. There are such extremes of poverty and wealth, ignorance and culture, in the South that it is difficult to classify them properly for all classes. You find the wealthy landowner dwelling in an elegant house on a farm or plantation of several hundred acres while his nearest neighbor, usually neighbors, may live in a hovel on the same farm surrounded by dirt and squalor of the worst sort. It is of the dweller in the hovel we wish to write. His life, his surroundings, his temptations we desire to reach and help. Not that the other fellow doesn't need help, but he is able to help himself. He knows the things he needs, but for generations

his people have been hoarders of dollars or hoarders of remnants of blue-blooded aristocracy. They will let go of neither. One is as great an evil as the other. There is absolutely no sympathy between this hoarder of aristocratic ancestry and the poor hovel dweller. But more of that later.

Shall we call him a day laborer? I suppose so. That is about the way most of them live. They are witty, quick to see, but look with wonder upon education and scholarship. We have seen them open their eyes in astonishment when told that one can read two lines at a time or peruse an ordinary novel in a few hours. It is not always the day laborer who is so amazed. Sometimes it is the mountaineer who owns some hundreds of acres of rock, gravel, and scrubby trees and calls it a cattle range or sheep ranch.

A generation ago these people tilled the soil in a small way, making their living selling a little corn, a little wheat, now and then a steer, or perchance working by the month for the more successful farmer in the lowlands. It was easier then than now, because there was a government distillery every few miles and the mountain farmer could sell the corn raised in his fertile valley or on his rich hillside for a good price within a short distance from his home. In those days corn was about all he raised. That is the secret of the practical failure of the government to break up the illicit distilling of liquor. Every few weeks now an illicit still is "raided" by revenue officers and in some cases hundreds of gallons of malt destroyed. The mountaineer dwelling in the coves and hills oftentimes declares that God gave these things to him,

therefore he has a right to use them so as to make a living the easiest way. Do you think these mountains need mission work? If it were not claiming his inalienable right to make whisky without paying revenue he would be claiming some other so-called inalienable right, for his chief right seems to be following the line of least resistance.

Now that the government is making strenuous efforts to stop illicit distilling and "moonshining" this hardy mountaineer must look elsewhere for a living. Sometimes he hunts. Some dig ginseng and other herbs, marketing them at the nearest store. Others gather chestnuts in season, peel tan bark, or do anything else that presents itself. Suffice it to say that most of them do not work when they have rations ahead for a day or two.

In recent years much of the timber is being sawed and marketed. This gives employment to all who care to work. With timber marketing has come increased price for unskilled labor. Formerly fifty or seventy-five cents was counted a good price for day labor. Now it is usually one dollar. This is true, however, only of the saw yards and logging camps. On the farms the price remains low. Some laborers—and they are not all negroes either—may be had for fifty cents or less, and they board themselves.

Given a chance they become fairly good carpenters or blacksmiths or masons, but usually do not accumulate wealth to any extent. Very few of them become contractors even in the least sense of that word. To become contractors they must think, and that is hard work, and yet you cannot beat one of them in a trade.

Many of these people own their own homes—a small house and a lot but little larger. Some are fair renters; that is, they farm several acres of another man's land. They sometimes get out to the lowlands and there rent. Most of the people referred to in this chapter belong to the class almost wholly illiterate. They do not accumulate property because they cannot calculate. Need I ask, Do they need mission work or Church Extension aid?

CHAPTER VI

THEIR SERVICE

BEFORE we enter upon a more technical discussion of the various conditions of this Southerner not aforementioned we deem it wise to speak of his service to his country.

"If we take the term Southern mountaineers in its broader extent, all must agree that the service rendered the nation by the mountaineers of the South has been a notable one."¹

Men like Boone, Crockett, Sevier, Bean, Robertson, the Shelbys, the Donelsons, the Doaks, the Carters, and the Bledsoes did an untold and an almost unheralded good as those who blazed the way for the coming of civilization. They not only did good as frontiersmen, but later they helped the infant republic to hold its own against the onslaughts of the British. True, these men were usually clad in buckskin and bearing their trusty rifles, but no one doubted either their courage or their aim. Fearless as tigers, they were as brave as lions. Often they took their lives in their hands and went in defense of the weak or to open untrodden paths that the women and children might follow. After his little cabin was built and his small field cleared he had to be constantly on guard in the cultivation of his crops. If he but went to the spring half a hundred yards away for a bucket of water he must take with him his trusty

¹ President S. T. Wilson, *The Southern Mountaineers*, p. 22.

rifle. He plowed, or rather dug, and hoed corn with this same rifle slung across his manly shoulders. Later when he must sell the fur products of the winter, or procure ammunition and necessary clothing and articles of food, he must go by stealth to the nearest trading post, usually a fort, and there purchase needed supplies, always going and coming at the imminent risk of his life.

You can safely say that individually and collectively the people of the South are patriotic, and that they believe in the true God. Anarchy and infidelity are practically unknown to the native Southerner. His ancestors carried the Book with them, and he has ever found it good enough for him. His ideas of God, Providence, and subjects of a like nature may be vague and regarded as superstitious by some, but he is true to them and mayhap his superstition helps him in being faithful. Likewise his fathers carried the law with them. It was held as sacred as the Book itself. In most instances the Book was law and is yet. The mountain country justice of the peace often is more just in meting out the law than is the city judge who may have all the appearances of learning and wisdom without any of the penetration counting for so much in a judgment. We once heard a district attorney characterize a certain mountain country magistrate as being "able to see a point in law through a brick wall." But we are not to speak so much of these things as of actual warfare.

Aside from the early defenses against the Indians, we first find this Southern mountaineer in the Revolution, more particularly at the battle of

King's Mountain,¹ a cone-shaped hill in Lincoln County, North Carolina. Here the British had intrenched themselves under the command of Ferguson, who declared "the Almighty himself could not drive him from it." Nine hundred chosen men armed with rifles surrounded the unbeliever and completely routed his men after killing him.² These nine hundred men were chosen from the riflemen of the mountaineers. Thomas Jefferson said of this battle, "That memorable victory was the annunciation of that turn of the tide of success which terminated the Revolutionary War with the seal of independence."³

These mountaineers were of great service in the Indian wars. Long life in the woods and forests taught them to be as crafty as the red man himself. He soon learned to imitate the Indian's decoy call for turkeys and other wild game. There is on record the death of more than one redskin taking quick passage to the "happy hunting ground" while following up the answer to his decoy sound. The Campbells, the Carters, the Shelys, Sevier, and Robertson, with their trusty mountain riflemen, often outwitted the Indian in the border warfare of that day. In cunning the white man may not have been so great, but in craftiness and strategy he soon outgrew him. Never in any war, Indian or other, has this mountaineer failed to respond to the call of his country. Look at Jackson in the War of 1812, and do not forget Ensign Sam Houston in the same war. Think of

¹ Phelan, *History of Tennessee*, p. 29.

² *Historians' History of the World*, vol. xxiii, p. 277.

³ Garrett and Goodpasture, *History of Tennessee*, p. 86.

the Seminole War, and of the Black Hawk War, in which Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis figured not without conspicuousness. Then the civil war—who can tell their value in this great struggle to preserve the liberty won more than three quarters of a century before? Some will say that the mountaineers had no use for slaves, therefore they naturally took the opposition; others will say the mountain man was carried off his feet by the leadership of such men as Andrew Johnson and William Gannaway Brownlow. True, these causes had their bearing, but knowing the mountain man as I do it seems to me that he agreed with Abraham Lincoln in the thought that the one word Union should mean more than all else. His ancestors had seen Ireland fail and become oppressed because her brave leaders lacked unity; they had seen Scotland prevent oppression because of a united leadership.¹ This ancestry had not forgotten to teach posterity what unity meant. Then, too, he has always placed his country first. Ignorant and illiterate though he be, on questions of general government this man thinks with remarkable clearness.

In the civil war two congressional districts in Tennessee, the first and second, furnished more volunteers for the Union service than any district in the United States of a like population.² Perhaps the most attractive thing about this enlisting is that it was almost entirely purely voluntary. In many instances the men traveled at night in order to evade the Confederate conscripting officers and enter the Union army. Some men became famous

¹ D. H. Montgomery, *English History*, pp. 117, 118.

² See civil war records of that period.

piloting refugees through the Confederate lines to the Federal army and a place of Union safety. Captain Daniel Ellis, who died about two years ago, has a name far more than local. His book, published by Harpers, had a wide sale and copies of it are now much sought after by ex-Federal soldiers. Only a short while ago the writer procured one for the commandant of a State Soldiers' Home in a Northern State. Other men became almost as famous as did Captain Ellis. By the way, Captain Ellis lived in the same county¹ that gave to the nation General Samuel P. Carter, who was both a naval and an army officer—the only man to bear such distinction, I am reliably informed. General James Carter, of the regular army, comes from the same county.

It might not be fair to say that these men saved the Union, but there is no question about their doing much toward it. In the far North or the far South it was not hard to be a Union man or a Confederate, respectively. But on middle ground, where lines were sharply drawn, it was a matter of much moment, requiring no little courage and judgment. That these men never hesitated to strike a blow for the the Union is sufficient evidence of their integrity. But let us say here that "Stonewall" Jackson was a mountain man.

The writer feels deeply his inability to tell as it should be told the story of these brave people. The way they fight for their rights and privileges can be told only by one who could fittingly tell of the deeds of a Bruce, a Wallace, or any Highland laird of the olden times. Such names as MacNeil, Mac-

¹ Carter County, Tennessee.

Donald, MacReynolds, MacAmis, Dunbar, and also other "Macs" tell without further words what might be expected of such a people bearing such names and of such ancestry.

Then there is the war of Cuba's freedom. At the first clarion call the men of the mountains went forth to give their lives, if need be, for the liberty of the dusky brother on the Pearl of the Antilles. A friend whose hobby is statistics has informed us that one of these mountain counties¹ sent the largest per cent of volunteers to this war of any county in the United States.

To quote President Wilson again: "This chapter would be incomplete were it not to call attention, before closing, to the service rendered their country by individuals of this mountain region. A mere mention of a few representative names will emphasize the great part that, in spite of all their seclusion, the Appalachians have had in the affairs of the nation. There are the pioneers Boone, Sevier, the Shelbys, Davy Crockett, and Sam Houston; the Presidents Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, and Andrew Johnson; the famous Confederates Zebulon B. Vance, John H. Reagan, and "Stonewall" Jackson; the renowned Unionists Parson Brownlow and Admiral Farragut; the inventor Cyrus H. McCormick; and the man of the nation, Abraham Lincoln. Surely the annals of the country would be the poorer were the deeds of the men of the Appalachians not found recorded in them."

¹ Greene County, Tennessee.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT THEY DO NOT KNOW

IT may seem strange that a people so patriotic and so thoroughly Protestant should be so careless of their mental training. Their illiteracy is doubtless more accidental than intentional. The writer would naturally like to make some plausible excuse for the ignorance and at the same time the innocence of this Southern mountaineer. He would feel more justifiable in making excuse if the ignorance applied alone to the mountain man of the South. But since it is equally true of the dweller on the plains and on the large plantation it seems best to tell the plain unvarnished truth. We feel that in very few instances have the exact facts been known. It may not be too much to say that this is as important a field for mission work as some of the foreign fields. We will draw no conclusion, but tell the truth as it is given us to see the truth, and the reader may judge for himself.

It is safe to say that the greatest trouble in all this land is that the educational facilities provided by the States are wholly inadequate for the demands of the people. First of all, they do not reach the people. In these United States it ought not to be necessary for any Church to educate the people, especially before they get through the eighth grade. Some think a compulsory school law in all the States would solve the problem. It probably would help, but the number of schoolhouses would have

to be doubled or the ones now in existence enlarged. It is the opinion of the writer that the States try to cover too much ground with the little money they now have. They have money enough, perhaps, to do fairly good work through five grades. Instead of that they try to go through eleven grades and in some instances twelve. The result is very imperfect work. We should "lessen the denominator."

Parts of the following Southern States are in the mountain region of the South: Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The following tables compiled from the United States Census of 1900 show some things. The per cent of illiteracy is for native male citizens twenty-one years of age and over, foreign-born citizens and negroes of the same age. We take the seven States in which are found the Southern Appalachians or their ranges:

TABLE I

| | PER CENT OF ILLITERATES | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------|
| | White | Foreign white | Negroes |
| Georgia..... | 11.8 | 5.6 | 56.4 |
| Kentucky..... | 14.3 | 8.6 | 49.5 |
| North Carolina..... | 18.9 | 5.7 | 53.1 |
| South Carolina..... | 12.3 | 5.2 | 54.7 |
| Tennessee..... | 14.1 | 7.7 | 47.6 |
| Virginia..... | 12.2 | 10.5 | 52.5 |
| West Virginia..... | 10.7 | 22.5 | 37.8 |
| Average totals..... | 13.4 | 9.4 | 50.2 |

Compare these figures with those of the United States as a whole and we have the following: 13.4 and 4.9; 9.4 and 11.5; 50.2 and 47.4. Only the first startle. The more enterprising foreigners come South as traders, peddlers, and other business men.

Most of the negroes in the United States are in the South. It is the illiteracy of the white man that is so appalling. Feel as you please, the South is a white man's country and will so continue for untold generations. This is as it should be; but this same white man should not boast of his up-to-dateness so long as this illiteracy is extant. Think what an illiterate vote of more than 13 per cent of the total might mean under certain conditions.

Of the States named above, West Virginia and Kentucky have compulsory school laws. So have North Carolina and Tennessee in part. You may, however, count the compulsory school laws in these States as a farce, since they are not enforced "to hurt," as the little boy said about his father's religion.

To show causes for the existence of facts as given in Table I we give other statistics. Where not otherwise stated the figures are for 1906-7 as given in the report of the Commissioner of Education for the United States:

TABLE II

| | Per cent of school population enrolled | Per cent of enrolled actually attending |
|---------------------|---|--|
| United States..... | 69.83 | 70.26 |
| Georgia..... | 63.18 | 62.41 ¹ |
| Kentucky..... | 72.52 ² | 61.78 ³ |
| North Carolina..... | 70.52 ³ | 65.87 ³ |
| South Carolina..... | 61.66 | 73.49 |
| Tennessee..... | 77.41 ³ | 69.17 ³ |
| Virginia..... | 58.61 | 59.55 |
| West Virginia..... | 74.96 | 65.60 |
| Average totals..... | 68.4 | 65.41 |

Make your own comparison.

¹ 1904-5.

² 1902-3.

³ 1905-6.

The following is not void of interest:

TABLE III

| | Average number of days school kept | Average number of days' attendance for all pupils | Average number of days' attendance by each pupil enrolled |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| United States..... | 151.2 | 74.3 | 106.2 |
| Georgia..... | 118 ¹ | 45.8 | 73.6 |
| Kentucky..... | 90 | 40.3 | 55.6 |
| North Carolina..... | 95 ² | 40.1 ² | 57.6 ² |
| South Carolina..... | 104.5 | 45.5 | 73.5 |
| Tennessee..... | 116 | 58.7 ³ | 80.2 ³ |
| Virginia..... | 134 | 47.2 | 80.5 |
| West Virginia..... | 127.5 | 62.3 | 83.1 |
| Average totals..... | 112.1 | 48.5 | 72 |

Again make your own comparison.

But what about Table IV? Examine it closely, please:

TABLE IV

| | Amount raised per capita of scholastic population | Amount expended per capita of total population | Amount expended per capita of avg. attendance |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| United States..... | \$14.28 | \$3.90 | \$27.98 |
| Georgia..... | \$3.03 ¹ | \$0.98 | \$7.47 |
| Kentucky..... | 3.60 | 1.19 ² | 8.59 |
| North Carolina..... | 3.06 ³ | 1.09 ³ | 7.82 ³ |
| South Carolina..... | 3.00 | 0.96 | 6.37 |
| Tennessee..... | 4.77 | 1.49 ² | 9.23 ³ |
| Virginia..... | 5.27 | 1.68 | 15.28 |
| West Virginia..... | 10.34 | 3.07 | 20.36 |
| Average totals..... | \$4.72 | \$1.49 | \$10.73 |

These four tables show us some things and in part account for the frightful illiteracy of our

¹ 1904-5.

² 1902-3.

³ 1905-6.

Southern people. However, the main cause lies, like everything else, in our unwillingness to pay the price. In 1904 the United States as a whole expended for public schools on each \$100 of true valuation on all real and personal property 25.5 cents. These seven States expended on the same basis for the same year 21.6 cents. It is not necessary to call the reader's attention to the fact that we are far behind the average on other things as well as education. One more fact should be given. Not long since the superintendent of public instruction in one of these States made the statement during his service as head of the school interests of his State for two terms that seventy-five per cent of the schools were failures, and that because of incompetent teachers! In 1906-7 the United States expended \$6.43 per capita of teachers in public normal schools for the training of teachers.¹ The seven States in question expended \$2.09 per capita of teachers for the training of their teachers—about one third the average for the whole country. What can be expected of a people who do not demand and provide skilled teachers? Can a stream rise higher than its source? A distinguished educator who spent some time in the South very frankly said that he had never been in a place where such a premium is placed on cheapness. Very few if any of these States have laws requiring applicants for license to teach to know more than the branches they expect to teach. To illustrate: One may teach a primary (fifth grade) school by having completed the fifth grade work as prescribed by the school law in most of the Southern States, and passing a satis-

¹ Report of the Commissioner of Education, 1907, vol. ii.

factory examination, the examination in many instances being little more than a farce. To get to teach a public school in the mountain district often places one high up among his fellows and usually bestows upon him forever the title of "Professor"!

Why, do you know that of the native white male voters in these seven States 13.4 per cent were illiterate at the last census, while of the same class in the United States as a whole only 4.9 per cent were illiterate? We are nearly thrice the average for illiteracy. But this is not all. Mere book learning does not constitute an education. Neither does it make for all there is of culture and refinement and the things having an upward tendency. There is a dearth of general reading among our people. A county paper, a yellow journal or cheap novel, and an almanac issued by some irresponsible patent medicine concern is all you find in many of these mountain homes. Usually there is a Bible, but the writer recently procured several dozen Bibles for distribution by mountain preachers, and they were not enough.

What sort of mental fiber can be built on the average county newspaper? Many homes are without even it, and are perhaps none the worse therefor. There is a lack of good literature even in the home of the average well-to-do farmer. A stock book, a family doctor book, or an "Everybody's Lawyer" often takes precedence over every other sort of publication to enter such homes. The growing mind has absolutely nothing to feed upon. It is not an exaggeration to say that the farm live stock is often better cared for than the farm boy. The mules and colts and calves and lambs and pigs bring

money at an early age. The boy doesn't. This figure is by no means overdrawn.

May we say one or two things more? It would be a good thing if every boy could be taught the evil of expectorating on the floors of living rooms, schoolrooms, and churches, and also sidewalks, street cars, and railway coaches. Very few of these mountain boys have an idea that spitting wherever one pleases is unhealthy, to say nothing of the lack of culture and refinement it implies. The lack of a bath is not all. It is hard to get the boys and girls to see the need of cleaning their shoes when entering a house. Many of the men and women are the same way. Now, please do not think I am thinking of a few and make these statements accordingly. I am thinking of hundreds and thousands—come and I will show you.

The few who attend church is another astonishing feature. According to a recent estimate made by the Presbyterian Church, the branch known locally as the Southern, there are three million white children in the Southern States out of Sunday school. Is this a field for mission work?

There is more yet. In many of the so-called local centers of civilization there are those who have peculiar ideas about things. They think any sort of an old schoolroom is sufficient. We knew one woman, who in her imagination is a blue-blooded aristocrat, to say it was a useless and foolish expenditure of money to paper a schoolroom! Do you want to see her? This woman has a diploma from a Southern college. Do you not think we have problems aside from illiteracy? But they are to be treated later.



AN OLD CHURCH IN WHICH METHODISTS CONTINUE TO WORSHIP

We think schoolrooms and churches ought to be better furnished than the best dwelling houses in the community, and that the children should be taught to care for them. Where are the boys and girls to get an impetus to that which is higher if not at school and church?

Just one more point and this chapter endeth—though there is more to it. Do you think the man who feels it is “stuck up” to shave oftener than once a week or month, or change his linen every two weeks, or bathe his feet at all, is in need of missionary work? Do you think the woman who cooks like “mam” did, who “dips” snuff all day long and gives it to her children, who goes barefoot most of the year, who perhaps changes dresses once a week—not oftener—and who combs her hair once a day—maybe—a fit subject for the missionary? Do you? Do you want to see such people? Come. They have good “mother wit,” too.

Again I say there is more to literacy than reading and writing. Such people as are mentioned in this chapter we have not by the hundreds but by the thousands.

Yes, and don't you think a young mother, good-looking and well-to-do as such is counted in the hills, who would start to a near-by town for a visit, taking her two children along, and all their necessary belongings packed in two gaily painted peck baskets, needs to be taught that such things as suit cases and traveling bags have been invented? If you want to see such, come.

These statistics tell a good story—some statistics relating to an isolated township of average condition, in a border county, in the Southern Appa-

lachians. Eighty-three families were considered just as found by the person making the test:

I

Average distance to county seat, $15\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
 " " " post office, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
 " " " public school, $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
 " " " doctor, 4 miles.
 " " " church, $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
 " " " store, $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

II

Total area of farm land owned by the above families,
 2,279 acres.
 Average size of farm, 27 acres.
 Total amount cultivated, 639 acres.
 Average amount cultivated to farm, $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

III

Crops, gross, \$13,018.
 Crops, net, \$12,379.
 Seven made no crop.
 Average to farm, \$161.

IV

Rations: Total amount, \$4,438 for year 1908; average
 per family, \$53.47.
 Meal: 64 raised, 19 bought.
 Flour: Total, \$1,532; average per family for flour, \$18.30.
 Pork: 45 raised, 38 bought.
 Coffee: Total, \$718.80; average for coffee per family,
 \$8.66.
 Sugar: Total, \$578; average for sugar per family, \$6.90.
 Molasses: 40 raised, 16 bought, 27 used none.
 Tobacco and snuff: Total expenditure, \$902; 13 raised
 all or in part; average per family purchasing, \$12.56.
 Clothes: Total expenditure, \$2,949; average per family,
 \$35.42.

V

Taxes: Total amount, \$204.60; average per family,
 \$2.46.
 Men working road, 56.
 Type of Houses:
 Frame, 24;
 Log, 44;
 Box, 15. Total, 83.

Average size of family, $5\frac{1}{2}$.

Number sleeping in room, $4\frac{1}{2}$.

Number of beds in room, 1 to 4.

Average number of windows per house, $1\frac{1}{2}$.

Ventilation: Minus.

Sanitation: Minus.

Out closets, 6.

Cooking facilities: 68 families have stoves; 15 cook on fire places.

Meals: 69 families have meals regularly; 14 families have no regard for regularity.

Illegitimacy: $16\frac{2}{3}\%$ of parents illegitimate; 8% of children illegitimate.

Physical conditions:

Prevalent diseases.

Tuberculosis.

Venereal disease.

Hookworm disease.

Conditions affecting health:

Lack of ventilation and sanitation.

Monotony of diet.

Insufficient clothing.

Consanguinity.

These figures and estimates are in no sense overdrawn, but are made by one very careful. They can be duplicated in many instances. They almost prove that the mountain man is not so very healthful, after all.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PROBLEM

^ FAR be it from us to minimize any racial problems high-bred Southerners claim to be in existence, but to our way of thinking the South, chivalrous, patriotic, impulsive, and valorous as she has ever been and is yet, has but one problem. Shall we name it? If so, what shall we call it? We want to make every one of our some ten millions of people in the South feel good, but we must name that one problem *ignorance*, pure and simple. We write this from the standpoint of one who was born and raised in one of the seceding States and who has no thought other than that he shall spend his days here. But that one word tells the truth and the whole truth. The preceding chapter of facts proves it. Now, may we give a few reasons why this is true, absolutely true?

First of all, the South is yet much more of an isolated place and section than we are wont to think. We are progressive in a sense and our leaders are broad and cosmopolitan thinkers, but among many of the well-to-do you find that Lee surrendered, but they never have. Why, I can show you men on plantations of hundreds of acres who yet believe in the divine right of human slavery, and who expect if all the powers of the Federal government get into the hands of a certain political party that they will get pay for slaves freed by the civil war! Is that ignorance? This same man thinks

he ought to have his slaves back. He has been to college, too, and has been born since Appomattox. These men dwell in the mountains of the South and are just as pronounced as those who dwell farther South where "cotton is king and sugar cane is queen." These are the people who make the problem difficult of solution. They are "hidebound," if I may use the word. They travel but little, and then only in places where they know they will find things suited to their tastes. Everything must be Southern as taught to them for generations. The poor white man or the man who has no blue-blooded ancestry of which to boast can have no place with them. They often live in lordly isolation with this same poor white man to serve and wait and slave and labor. As our free public schools advance it is no uncommon thing to see the children of the one and the other side by side in school keeping pace and graduating together. But always there is the gap or abyss between.

We write as an impartial observer, though our fathers were slave owners.

It may seem strange, but certainly in no part of the world are there people of a common ancestry who are at such extremes of poverty and wealth, of ignorance and learning, of uncouthness and culture, as you find in the Southern States. The tragedy of the whole thing is that the man of wealth, learning, and culture has so little sympathy with his brother of poverty, ignorance, and uncouthness. His is an education of aristocracy and not of democracy. It is perhaps not too much to say that in many instances he would sooner help the negro than a poor white man. Many are

familiar with the saying in certain sections, "I'd rather be a negro than a poor white man."

This same well-to-do white man in the South often gets to be an editor, a member of the legislature, a congressman, or a United States senator. He frequently continues to view the world through the same inconsistent smoked glasses, as the following incident will show. The Speaker referred to was Hon. Thomas B. Reed, and the incident took place in Washington in the first months of 1898, immediately preceding the Spanish-American war:

"I remember a scene in the Speaker's office just before the outbreak of war, which illustrates not only his attitude in this matter, but the quickness of his wit. I had gone to his office at his request in relation to certain matters connected with the business of the Coast Survey. As we sat talking a Southern member of Congress burst into the room, his face aflame with excitement, a newspaper in his hand. Planting the paper on the table before the Speaker, he demanded in an excited voice whether a civilized nation would permit such things as were there described within ninety miles of its borders. Slowly adjusting his glasses, the Speaker cast his eye over the paper. At the top, in large headlines, was a story of the sufferings of the reconcentrados. But about halfway down the page, in smaller lines, was an account of an assault on a negro postmaster in one of the Southern States. Instead of reading the top lines, the Speaker read in his drawling voice the lower set of headlines: 'The Postmaster at Blank Shot—His Wife Ill-treated—His House Burned.' 'Why, my friend,' said he, in the same drawling tone, 'that can't be down

South; that must be over in Cuba. If we had a civilization like that we wouldn't want to spread it over Cuba anyhow, would we?' By that time the would-be saviour of Cuba was well on his way out of the room."¹

The one redeeming feature about this middle class and "poor whites," for whose help this little book is sent out, is that they may be made over in one generation. Our schools and colleges are full of touching incidents. The problem is not what they can do, but how to get them to do it. These classes have furnished men in every walk of life from alderman to president; from circuit preacher to the episcopacy; from local magistrate to supreme court judge; and from a country doctor to an eminent physician and surgeon. Nor should we leave out the country school-teacher who later became college professor and university president.

Since Dr. Wilson tells us to quote as we like from *The Southern Mountaineers*, we take the following as illustrative of the classes involved in the problem:

"A century and a half have passed away, and the men of the mountains of to-day are the descendants of some of those sterling pioneers. They have held lonely state for several generations in their Appalachian homes; but they are still there to give account of themselves, and to face the providential future. There have developed among these dwellers in the mountains three distinct classes that must be recognized by every judicious student of their history.

¹ Henry S. Pritchett in the *North American Review* for March, 1909, "Some Recollections of McKinley."

“(1) There are the large numbers of them that have occupied the fertile and extensive valleys of the Shenandoah and East Tennessee, and other rich valleys and plateaus, and have established centers of trade and commerce that have developed such prosperous cities and towns as Chattanooga, Knoxville, Johnson City, Bristol, Asheville, Salem, Roanoke, Lexington, Staunton, and Harrisonburg. These mountaineers, or rather valley-dwellers, have to deal only with such questions as affect other intelligent sections of our land. They send out missionaries to the ends of the earth, and have as rich and pure a life as have any urban or country people of our Southland. They outnumber the other two classes combined. To apply to them any hasty generalizations suggested by a study of the third class is simply unpardonable.

“(2) Away from these centers of wealth or competence, and culture, and refinement, there are two other classes more affected by their mountain environment than are these others that merely live in sight of the mountains or in the highland communities that are ‘lowland’ in their development. There are, first, the true, worthy mountaineers that deserve far more of praise than of dispraise. While their isolated and hard life, remote from the centers of culture, has contracted their wants and the supply of those wants, and has forced them to do without a multitude of the ‘necessities’ and conveniences and luxuries that seem indispensable to many other people of the twentieth century, they have kept that which is really worth while, namely, their virility and force of character.

“The fact is that Nature, in accordance with her

marvelous method of compensations, has endowed these hardy mountaineers with some sterner qualities in lieu of the more Chesterfieldian ones of more favored society; qualities that render them in some respects stronger and more resourceful than their more pampered kinsmen of the valley or the plain. They have escaped many of the vices and follies that are sapping the life of modern society. They have nerves, in this day of neurasthenia and neuremia. They know something of all the necessary arts, in these days when centralized labor gives each workman only a part of one art to which to apply himself.

/ "The mountaineer of this class eats what he raises, and applies to the store for only coffee and sugar to supplement what his acres produce. He does his own horseshoeing, carpentering, shoemaking, and sometimes he weaves homespun. He is the most hospitable host on earth and heartily enjoys his guest, providing that guest has the courtesy to show his appreciation of what is offered him. His honesty coexists with native shrewdness that is sometimes a revelation to the unscrupulous visitor that would take advantage of him in a trade. He is usually amply able to take care of himself. Indeed, no American has a livelier native intelligence.

"To speak of this class of mountaineers as meriting patronizing disdain is to show oneself to be a most superficial observer. Many of these men of the mountains do, perhaps, need much that can be given from without the Appalachian, but they have a reserve strength that, when aroused, will speedily prove them the peers of any people.

“(3) There is a third and much smaller class of mountaineers of which not so much good can be said. They correspond to, while entirely different from, that peculiar and pitiable lowland class of humanity that was one of the indirect products of the institution of slavery—‘the poor whites,’ or ‘mudsills,’ as they used to be called. They are the comparatively few, who are very incorrectly supposed by many readers of magazine articles to be typical of the entire body of Southern mountaineers. By this mistaken supposition a mighty injustice is done to a very large majority of the dwellers in the Appalachians. As fairly judge England by ‘Darkest England’; or London by Whitechapel; or New York by the slums; or any community by the submerged tenth.

“This third class consists of the drift, the flotsam and jetsam that are cast up here and there among the mountains. They are the shiftless, ambitionless degenerates, such as are found wherever men are found. Usually they own little or no land and eke out a precarious existence, as only a beneficent Providence that cares for the birds and other denizens of the forest could explain.

“The proportion of Scotch-Irish names may not be so great among these people, but many such names are found among them. This class would be a very hopeless one were it not for a quality that will be referred to again—namely, the fact that it can be made over in one generation.

“It need hardly be said that, as in all classifications of men on the basis of character and condition, there are many gradations among these three classes; and, indeed, that the classes themselves

merge into one another so that at times it is impossible to say just where one ends and another begins. But why be too nice in determining metes and bounds? Is there not even in the great metropolis a slum problem, and is there not a Fifth Avenue problem—both with indeterminate boundaries? The worthiest question anyone can ask himself is: How can I best help any brother man of mine, of any rank and race, submerged or non-submerged, to realize his high calling in Christ Jesus?"¹

While we may not exactly agree with what Class One is doing according to President Wilson, we do know that Class Two and Class Three are the people we want to reach. We feel safe in saying also that it may not be easily done through Class One, though that is the way it should be done. Class One have sufficient advantages, comparatively speaking. They need waking up.

Class Two is perhaps the strongest of the classes and is possessed of the greatest possibilities. But there will be more development in Class Three than in any, once you get him aroused. He is the man who is made over in one generation. It is he who calls for the best there is in us.

With the first class able to take care of itself and the second class willing to help, it is up to us to see to it that this third class, who doesn't care a straw which way the wind blows, is made to care. How shall we reach him? But do not forget that in the humble opinion of the writer each of these classes is a fit subject for more or less missionary work—the first because he could do more if he

¹ President S. T. Wilson, *The Southern Mountaineers*, pp. 15-20.

were not "hidebound"; the second because he is willing but does not know how; and the third because he is almost helpless.

One of the first class said to a gentleman but recently in discussing the work of the Board of Education of our Church, and also the gifts of Northern men to Southern educational and church work, "Darn 'em, they took our property; let 'em give us money." The words were prompted by the remark that Southerners have no right to expect Northern men to educate their children. This man was born since the civil war, but he thinks he should have pay for the slaves he failed to inherit. Does he need missionary work? Don't you dare tell him that, for he is sure he is "up-to-now." But I am not writing this for him.

It is this prejudice of the well-to-do Southerner against the lower class and less fortunate white man and negro that really gives us any problem at all. The mountain man is arbitrary in his feelings as well as in other things, but his more fortunate neighbor could help him if he would. But he will not for at least another generation. One of these "unterrified" recently remarked that the Masons turned Mr. Taft down, since they made him a Mason "at sight"! He believed it because a neighbor had so informed him.

I admit that some things in this chapter may seem a little "farfetched," but there is not a single one of them that cannot be substantiated and even duplicated almost any day. It is our business to tell the truth. Do you think we have a problem in these mountains? Do you think the words "race problem" express the situation clearly for the

South? Again we say the South has but one problem—*ignorance!* Just come and see.

But before we close this chapter let us mention one other thing tending to make the problem the more difficult. Things in local communities are so depressing. In church affairs in the country districts and even in the towns the preacher must be the leading factor. He must have the life and energy and push, or things stand still. The same is true of the educator. Rarely does he find a man who will take the initiative. Every fellow seems to be following the line of least resistance—the same old story of not caring which way the wind blows or if it blows at all. But this is just another phase of the problem, though a very true one and no less difficult than the others. It is particularly true of the man who shepherds a flock or leads a neighborhood in things educational. He has to make his own atmosphere of energy and endeavor if he breathes any.

Of course, the one and only method of redemption is religion and education. It is difficult to say which should come first. It seems that it takes the education to make the religion "stick." The work of the school should be spiritual, of course, but among us no greater work can be done than training the mind to stay at a thing as well as to get at it.

It might be well enough to say that another phase of the problem is the large families found in these mountain homes. Not infrequently six or eight or ten or even twelve persons cook, eat, and sleep in one room, and it often not twenty feet square! But there is plenty of ventilation. They

bring children into the world, but what about preparing them for the responsibilities of life? One native says that up in the Cumberland Mountains women raise large families of children without the incumbency of a husband! If you doubt it take a little trip up there or elsewhere in the Southern Appalachians.

If we were writing this for Secretary Mason we would include the mixed-blooded people as a part of the problem and blame them to the well-to-do Southerner.

CHAPTER IX

OTHER DENOMINATIONS

APROPOS of this little book for our own people specially but for all generally, it is but meet that a word be said about other denominations and what they are doing for the strengthening of the religious and educational fiber in a region not poor nor poverty-stricken save in imagination. And do you know any poverty direr or more pitiable than the imaginary? I do not mean that we are rich, but that we could do so much more than we do if we could only see it that way—could but get the vision.

A boy was digging potatoes on a red hillside when a passing stranger hailed him as to what he was doing and what the yield per acre would be.

"Six or eight bushels," replied the boy.

"My, my, but you must have a difficult time making a living in such a country as this," commented the stranger.

Other remarks of a similar nature, all breathing sympathy, followed until the boy had as much as he could endure, and suddenly cried out:

"I ain't as pore as yer think I am, stranger. I don't own this land; I'm jist a wurkin it!"

Take the reverse of this story, investigate and you will see that none of us in the South are as poor as we think we are. We may be a bit slow, but there is within us much latent power making us rich beyond our fondest dreams once we realize where our strength lies.

One would perhaps expect the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to have the greatest aggregate of wealth. And such is true. Since all Churches place more stress upon the ministry and preaching the Word than upon any other phase of religion, we think it best to emphasize the educational phase here. Hence our figures relate only to schools and their work. Only white schools are considered, the colored schools being left to Secretary Mason and like worthy men in other Churches.

We have tried to be very careful in compiling our figures, but may have made some errors. Our estimates are made for the States of Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia, and are taken from the Southern Methodist Handbook for 1909. According to this authority, this great Church has within the limits of these States one university, thirty colleges, and thirty-five academies and unclassified schools, with a total wealth of \$5,866,327; an endowment fund for those schools of \$2,748,602, and an enrollment of 13,170 students. True, this Church had its origin in the South in times when blood was thicker than water, and when men made church lines no less tense than those of party, war, or principle. This is pretty fair property as an educational plant. Much business can be done therewith.

We have the following for the Baptist Church in these seven States taken from the American Baptist Year Book for 1909: Five universities, sixteen colleges, and thirty-five academies and smaller schools. These show a total wealth of \$2,868,485, with \$1,460,745 endowment and an enrollment of

5,371 students. The Baptist Church has been in these States a long while and has had no internecine war to cut its power in twain as had some of the other Churches. This is not a bad showing for the Baptists.

According to President Wilson in The Southern Mountaineers, we gather some interesting facts about the Presbyterian Church. The figures are for the year 1905. Amount of endowment is not available, but it is good. Since this estimate was made there has been great increase in finances, especially at Maryville, Tennessee, and also in attendance within this splendid working Church.

But let us see for 1905. The Presbyterians then had one university, five colleges, and fifty-four academies and smaller schools, with a property valuation of \$1,934,620 and an enrollment of 8,478 students. Bear in mind that this Church pays the largest amount per capita of membership for all purposes of any Church in this country. Note also that her property valuation is barely one-third that of the Southern Methodists, but that she has almost two thirds their enrollment. And do not forget that this Church has fifty-four academies and smaller schools, or exactly one half more than any other Church operating in the South. To the writer's way of seeing things, this Church is doing preëminently the constructive and creative work in the South to-day, and it is by means of its smaller schools, whereby education is carried right up to the door of the fellow who will get it in no other way. It may be that we place too high an estimate on the work of the smaller schools as feeders to the colleges and larger schools, but look at results obtained

and certainly there is an admissible reason for the judgment.

These are the leading Churches in the South outside our own, which is to be treated in a separate chapter.

So far as we are able to learn, the United Brethren Church has but one school in the South, and that a very small one, the property being worth about \$18,000, the enrollment about 125, and the grade hardly more than academic.

The Christian Church has a few small schools, as do the Friends and a few of the smaller denominations. As has been said, the Catholics are establishing mission schools here and there where they expect to get a strong hold.

Will you study this chapter?

CHAPTER X

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

SINCE the reorganization of our Church in the South nearly half a century ago we have had somewhat of a strenuous life accompanied by a rather marvelous growth. Our ministers have been almost constantly on the firing-lines, so to speak. In many instances church lines have been tense, and even we have been told that we have no business in the South. Other things have tended to discourage the forwardness of our movements. Despite these and many other things, we have gone steadily forward until we are recognized now as one of the three or four leading denominations in the Southern States. Many things have converged to make us this. As one man put it in talking to Bishop Quayle recently, many like to belong to a whole and not to a detached part. They like our Church because it represents the original organization of Methodists. Many others also see great promise for the future in our Church, believing that as we make advances we will bring influential help tending to make not only for religious enterprise but for educational advancement and gain as well. They look upon it as a cosmopolitan Church from which reasonably great and broad results for the general good may be expected.

Led by godly men, our people have been always spiritualizing and inspiring to others. Nor have they feared to sacrifice personal conveniences and

desires for the common good. Possessed of "a strange warming of the heart," they have pushed forward into unthought-of places, carrying with them the sign and the spirit by which they always conquer. Too much cannot be said in praise of the people called Methodists. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that too much may be hoped for from them in the future, considered in a reasonable way.

We have some excellent property and some very fine church homes, but in this as well as in other things there are extremes of poverty and wealth, as illustrations would show.

When it comes to schools our Church compares favorably with others respecting work done, but not with respect to wealth. According to our Year Book for 1909, we have one university in these Southern States (these figures are concerning schools for the whites), one college, and eleven academies and smaller schools. These have an aggregate wealth of \$761,000, with an endowment fund of \$321,500 and an enrollment of 2,940. Counting property valuation and equipment, you will see that our number of students compares very favorably with any of the other schools.

With a rapidly developing and vastly resourceful country, it is fair to say that there is little danger of being too optimistic about the future of our Church in the South. It is rapidly taking hold of the people and making for itself a recognition among Churches and schools that is second to none.

Let not this be taken in adverse criticism, but it appears to the writer that if we could put more money into schools and churches farther up in the mountains, remote from centers of learning and

religious culture, results would be greater and more far-reaching. But that is a matter wholly for our farseeing leaders to settle. Certain it is that some of our best men have been started and given the inspiration to go ahead in some one of our little mountain schools. Our central university at Chattanooga readily testifies to the truthfulness of this statement, and it can do so among its best students to-day. Lest it may be said we are unduly prejudiced in favor of Methodist folk, we will close this chapter without more words of praise and prophecy for the magnificent Church which has never forgotten the words of its great founder, who wrought far better than he knew: "I look upon all the world as my parish."

However, just to show our religious resources, these figures, perhaps, are not out of place. Taking the following Conferences, Saint Johns River, Saint Louis, Alabama, Austin, Blue Ridge, Central Tennessee, Georgia, Gulf, Holston, Kentucky, Missouri, and West Virginia, we have, according to our Year Book, 1,133 preachers, 223,206 members, 221,541 Sunday school scholars, 2,943 churches worth \$6,200,560, and 728 parsonages worth \$1,425,118. This is a good plant with which to do business for the Lord, but we as Methodists can and will make it much more effective in the near years to come.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROGRESS OF THE SOUTH

WITH the many things set down as being against the South, there remains the indisputable fact that we are making rapid advancement, and that this progress is not confined to any particular locality, but seems to be widespread. Factories and mills have sprung up as if by magic. Where a short time ago you found a little "corn cracker," mashing a bushel or so of corn a day, you now see fine roller mills, turning out daily several barrels of flour nicely packed in bags supplying local trade and doing some merchant milling.

In many instances where stood the blacksmith shop or saw mill one sees an iron forge or a wood-working establishment, each giving employment to many men. And no better laborer is found than the Southern mountaineer. He has good nerve, plenty of grit, and his intelligence is such that he soon becomes a skilled laborer. Farther South the cotton mills have given great opportunities for the development of men of ability in the management of large affairs in milling interests. The people have not been slow to take advantage of all such opportunities.

Manufacturing interests and milling plants of all kinds have proven almost veritable gold mines to the South, but that which would appear of greater and more permanent value is the awakened and increasing vigorousness with which scientific

farming is pursued. We are many years behind yet on this, but recent advances seem prophetic of much greater things. As it has been for all historic time, so it is now and will ever be, that the permanency of any people depends upon the intelligence, skill, and success with which they till the soil, care for its fertility, and minimize its waste. And the strongest thing about farming here is that the dignity of labor is becoming more and more to be recognized as worth while, and that he who labors honestly for the welfare of his own household as well as that of others is respected, honored, and commended.

Quoting from *World's Work*, June, 1907, from which all the quotations in this chapter are taken, we have:

"Fifty years ago, moreover, the farmers of the Upland South wasted the lands—tilled a field recklessly for a few years, then cleared a 'new ground' and abandoned the old to broomsage and gullies; but now this land-debauchery has ended. Crop rotation and the legumes preserve the earth's fertility. Every year a crop of land-enriching cow-peas may be sandwiched in between the staple crops or cultivated in connection with them. Farmers no longer scratch over five hundred acres to make what intensive culture would produce on one hundred. 'Don't go West to find a new plantation,' says a new eastern-Carolina proverb; 'plow deeper and you will find a new one just below the old one you have been scratching on.'

"Two stories from real life will illustrate as well as anything else the whole story of the State's [North Carolina] farming progress.

“‘You see I could not afford to be governor!’ The man who said this is not a congressman nor a capitalist nor a manufacturer, but a humble, slave-born negro farmer—Calvin Brock, of Wayne County. He was talking to the governor of North Carolina, whose salary is only \$4,000 annually and whose clear profit is minus—while Calvin Brock had made the year before a clear profit of \$2,723.61 on fifteen acres of strawberries alone, besides cultivating fifty acres of land in other crops. The black Cincinnatus certainly could not afford to leave his plow for the salary of the chief executive—although he has never seen the inside of a schoolhouse and only learned to read and write by copying and conning a scrawled alphabet which a country carpenter penciled for him on a new pine shingle!

“Another experience is that of a white farmer in an adjoining county who paid five hundred dollars for a farm of fifty-three acres in 1899—not quite \$10 an acre. Its former owner had acted on the theory that he didn’t own anything except three inches of surface soil, and with such cultivation it took four acres of the land to make a bale of cotton. But that policy by no means commended itself to the new owner. Thoroughly inoculated with the idea of crop rotation and deep plowing, he astonished the soil itself by the energy of his reforms. Hitching an eleven-hundred pound mule to an ordinary plow, he found that it would not penetrate the brickyard that lay beneath the few inches of cultivated upper crust. Then he hitched up two horses and they broke off his plow, whereupon he swore and sent to Chattanooga for a four-horse disk plow. By this time the ‘moss-backed’ farmers who had

never averaged more than a quarter-bale per acre had sworn that he would ruin his land forever with his newfangled 'book-farming' ideas; but to no effect. 'I surely can't make money by your plans,' he retorted, 'and it can't be any worse to try the book-farming ideas, as you call them. And as for ruining the land, it's my own, I reckon, and I will plow clean down half way to China if I want to.' Of course, the man ought to have deepened his seed-bed gradually, instead of bringing so much subsoil to the surface at once, but liberal disk harrowing largely overcame his errors here, and the heavy cowpea crop and the barnyard manure did the rest. The next year indicated the land's upward trend; and by proper rotation and cultivation he brought it up until, in 1905, part of it made two bales of cotton per acre; and this year, following corn last year, he hopes for a two-bale average on the entire field. To-day he wouldn't sell his \$9.43 land of 1899 for \$100 an acre; and why should he, since even at that figure the buyer could pay for it with the first year's cotton crop? His example is but one of thousands that might be cited, and that have proved as contagious as measles."

Then, the people are changing their attitude on many questions. Half a century ago the plantation owners planned one of the professions for their boys, usually the law. Not so now. Quoting again, we read: "I asked a young man at one of the Southern schools of technology why he chose this training rather than training for one of the older professions. 'My grandfather,' said he, 'was a mighty man in theology in his day. He knocked out his opponents and he battered the devil. My

father was a lawyer and a soldier. He fought the United States by argument and in war. I notice that the devil and the United States are both doing business yet. I made up my mind, therefore, that I would change the family job and do what I can to build mills and roads in Georgia.' ”

Another instance: “Two men whose parents were ‘poor white trash’ have, without formal education, in ten or a dozen years made property worth \$200,000 by growing cotton; and they manage their business as systematically as any business in New York is managed.”

“I know a young man who declined a comfortable salary and a post of honor in a Northern university because he wished to teach country youth at his own Southern college on an insecure guarantee (year by year) of only \$500. There are hundreds such.”

We read further relative to going South: “Go South, young man; but do not go unless you are willing and able to do a man’s work. If you wish to practice the law or to preach, you will not be so likely to succeed. These professions are not particularly in need of recruits in the South. If you are a teacher, and especially if you think more of doing good work and of seeing appreciative results of your work than of earning a large income, you will find a field of usefulness as wide as the most ardent ambition could ask. If you are an engineer or any such craftsman—a man who can build things—you will find profitable work and plenty of it. The land cries out for builders, developers, workers, practical men; and great rewards await them. It has

(and to spare) philosophers and politicians and professional men of all the old sorts."

The magazine from which we quote so liberally in this chapter pays the highest tribute to the South by the following, our final quotation:

"The South has worked out three fundamental tasks which all the world may profit by:

"(1) How to teach the farmer who is now on the land to double his crop;

"(2) How to teach boys and girls practical trades while they are 'getting their education';

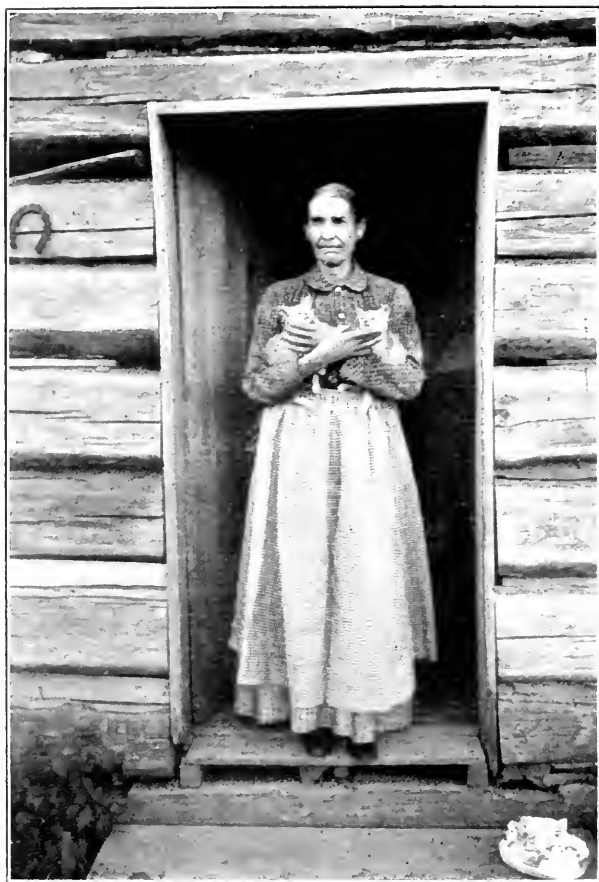
"(3) How to govern cities without politics and without graft."

[Do you know of any section of this great nation of which this may be said with a greater degree of truthfulness? We do like honesty and fairness and justice, and it does not hurt us to be told that we possess these essentials, particularly when the words come from fair-minded Northerners.

Another good sign is that people of the South are coming to have a more sympathetic view of education in a general way. They no longer think it should be confined to the wealthy and the large plantation owner. Educational ideas are everywhere widespread. One of the States, Tennessee, appropriated more money for educational purposes at the 1909 session of its General Assembly than it had appropriated in the eight previous years. This State is also providing for three normal schools for the training of its white teachers, one to be located in each geographical division of the State. One normal school is also provided which shall be for the training of negro teachers exclusively. Nearly all the other States in the South are taking the same

rapid strides in education. Of course, it will be years before our standards of efficiency are up to the other States of the nation, but be it remembered we are going in that direction.

These educational advantages, together with the iron, coal, cotton, rice, manufacturing, and small fruit industries, cannot do other than attract the eyes of the whole country toward the South. More than a generation ago the slogan given out by Horace Greeley was, "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country." Is it too much to expect that even in this generation we may hear the words, "Go South, young man, and grow rich with the country"?



A WEAVER AND LOVER OF CATS

CHAPTER XII

UNTO THE LAST

IN coming to the final chapter it may not be out of place to call attention to the fact that many of these mountain people are as clannish to-day as were their ancestors among the Scottish hills centuries ago. Only such clannishness could make possible the mountain feuds that existed for years in some parts of the South. And they break out once in a great while yet, but in a much subdued form.

The best illustration of clannishness outside the feuds is in the family of the old lady with the cats in her arms. She lives alone some distance from any member of her immediate family, yet they come to see her, supply wood and the necessities of life, and do all that is possible for her comfort. They are good citizens and splendid neighbors.

To broaden out a little, we may say that the South as a whole seems to be in an era of development. Our people are becoming more conservative and are helping more than ever to give an opening for the use of Northern capital, energy, and brains. Not that we do not have all these—'twouldn't be Southern to admit it if we didn't have—but that we need more.

Men are becoming less prejudiced toward the education of the masses and the races, and more receptive to all the Churches. This within itself is good indication of sure and permanent progress.

As might be expected, the men born since the

civil war are more conservative than their fathers, and it is perhaps not too much to hope that the second generation since that fearful struggle will be yet far more helpful in the development of their great and resourceful country.

Mr. Taft put it pretty well, as the following will show:

"Party lines are breaking up, have indeed broken up to an extent not generally realized. In part, this explains Mr. Taft's rise to power; and, at the same time, it gives him a great opportunity. Can we not now shake off a large part of the incubus which the civil war left resting on our politics for over a generation? Mr. Taft has stood firmly for the essential rights of a colored race in the Philippines. At the same time, he would not confer on them political rights and duties far in advance of their preparation. And he has a very sympathetic understanding of the Southern white man's attitude. One day in 1905, in the mid-Pacific, a little crowd of Congressmen from the North and South were talking of the 'race question' with him. The Northerners, of the civil-war generation, were stiff in the prejudices which had been hardened in the old contests over reconstruction. The Southerners, young men, though also strong in their particular prejudices, could still come halfway in the argument. As the party broke up, Mr. Taft said quietly to one of them: 'Well, there is one thing that our conversation shows us, anyway, and that is, we younger men on both sides can get fairly close together.'"¹

¹ Taken from "Taft the Administrator," James A. LeRoy in the *Century Magazine* for March, 1910.

Mr. Taft's thought is further emphasized by a few editorial lines taken from a little country weekly newspaper a few days ago: "As fast as the South can bring itself away from the narrow prejudices of sentimental politics, just that fast it will be made to blossom like a rose."

Then we are making substantial progress in an educational way. In the American Educational Review for May, 1909, we read:

"What Dr. Elmer Ellsworth Brown, United States Commissioner of Education, is pleased to term, in his latest report, 'one of the most striking educational movements of our time,' is the educational campaign now going on in the South, which, as Dr. Brown says, 'is making a chapter of surpassing human interest in the history of American civilization.' The public interest in education in the South is now vastly greater than that displayed in political events, and this, to those familiar with the Southern States and Southern people, is regarded as a turning of considerable magnitude. Every week records a Southern educational event of importance.

"There is a steady increase in State appropriations, in many instances the school funds having been more than doubled during the past three years. For example, Tennessee has raised its annual State appropriation from \$407,644 in 1904 to \$1,030,524 in 1907, and during the same period Georgia went from \$800,000 to \$1,591,441.

"One of the marked features of the general advance is the consolidation of the rural schools. In Virginia 200 schools have been consolidated to sixty; in four years Tennessee has reduced her

number of schools nearly 700 by a process of consolidation; Florida shows a single colony where forty-five schools have been made into fifteen; and the number of school districts in Louisiana transporting pupils to central schools was a year ago reported at thirty-seven, with fifty wagonettes used in the service. In passing it is worth noting that this consolidation and centralization of schools is helping along the good roads movement."

In an area representing about a third of one of our Southern mountain States it is estimated that more than 100,000 of the adult population, or about twenty per cent of the entire population for this area, are unconverted and without a church home. This same State as a whole ranks forty-sixth in the list of forty-eight States in native-born illiteracy. It pays seven dollars below the average per capita for education in the United States, and it pays practically nothing for the education and the training of its teachers. Its length of school term is less than six months, and it does almost nothing for higher education. Below seventy per cent of its scholastic population are enrolled in its public schools, and below seventy-one per cent of the enrolled attend regularly. The cost for prisons and courthouses in this State is about seventeen per cent more than for school buildings. This State is a fair average for all the mountain States of the South.

No one questions but that the solution to the problem is largely a matter of education. The Church that first plants a little mission among these mountains followed by a school is the Church not only to receive these people as faithful members,

but it receives the hearty support of those who never join any Church, which is often an opening wedge for greater work in that community. The mountaineer seldom travels farther than from one ridge or valley to another. The church or school to get him is the one to come right up to his door and show him its beauties and advantages with little or no effort on his part. He usually will not go away from home to get culture, refinement, education, and ethics; they must be brought to him, but not on a silver platter.

No greater work has been done by our Church or any other than, through its Home Missions and Church Extension Board, placing one hundred dollars or more in little mountain churches, thus making possible their building. The tragedy of the whole matter is that there are not more dollars to go in these churches. Just now the writer has in mind several churches in course of erection or planned each of which must have one hundred dollars or more from this Board or fail. And in each place a church and the influences going with it are badly needed. If the Board but had the money!

Then there are our schools. No people have minds more receptive to education than the three classes herein mentioned. But they must have the schools placed at their doors. The preparatory school can do the greatest good of any school. Once the mountaineer gets that much at home, he can and often does go away to college and university. The illiteracy in many of our mountain sections is appalling. In almost all the mountain counties the illiterate voter holds the balance of

power in anything like a closely contested election. Imagine possible results, if you please!

But the possibilities of the mountaineer are great. He has back of him generations of almost perfect health. His brain is perhaps the most perfect in form of that of any people on earth. The elasticity of its gray matter is surpassed only by its tenacity.

From the figures submitted it is seen that the State provision for education is wholly inadequate. Even in the opinion of the most sanguine and optimistic Southerner the mountain States will not for twenty-five years yet, at least, provide adequate educational facilities for these Highlanders of the South. Therefore, it is up not only to our own Church but to other denominations as well to do this.

Cannot our Church get the ear of the thinking North, the farsighted East, and the cosmopolitan West in such a way as to move them to give of their abundance to the development of the greatest latent powers possessed by any peoples?

A mission and a school mean a chapel and a college. They also mean men for India, China, Japan, Korea, and the islands of the sea. They mean what is even of greater import—men to stay right here among these mountains and help make the Church a broader and a greater benefactor of the human race than it has yet been. O, men of God, will ye say us nay?

Our people can do more than they think for, but they are not yet educated to it—they do not yet have the vision of the heights they should reach. We must help and get help right on until the vision comes, as it surely will.

A member of a Conference Church Extension Board was asked by a Northerner visiting the South as a Church official if it would be fair to recommend help by the Church Extension Board for the erection of a church in a certain small Southern town. The Southern member replied in the affirmative, much to the surprise of the visiting official, and explained himself by saying: "The class at G—— is able to give to the Board twice the amount asked by them as a loan and donation from the Board, but they do not believe it. So long as people think they are poor they are. We must help until our people are educated to see the blessedness of giving."

And thus it is ever with us—the specter of a past glory standing in the way of a living duty and obligation!

Church officials, like government officials, often pass through without making close examination of the situation. To merely visit an Annual Conference does not mean much. But getting out into the country with a Methodist circuit-rider means a great deal. It means seeing the problem face to face, learning how it is solved, and getting a comprehensive view of the great needs of our Church to help the people in remote and untrodden places. Come!

You would be surprised to have a Methodist preacher take you into a community far up in the mountains where the moral relation of the sexes is hardly more sacred than among the lower animals. Yet this man is the only preacher to carry a message of personal purity and cleanliness of life. Many, many such communities have no preacher at all.

And the people are native white Southern mountaineers, too. Many such homes are bare of even the commonest furniture and home comforts, not having even a comb for the hair, and they almost invariably wash the face at the spring branch where there is one!

But yet even these people are full of sacrifice for good once they get the idea—see the vision. Sometimes when the boy gets the thought that the sister should be educated she is sent to school while he hires out to the more substantial farmer and helps pay her tuition. Is not that a noble spirit—strange mixture of good and evil? Do you not think such a dormant spirit among a people to be numbered by the hundreds of thousands is worth rendering more than latent? Will you not with your money and brains and energy help us to do it? Money helps much, brains and energy help more, but your presence is the greatest asset of all. Come! See! Do!

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